

## WHY BE THE EDITOR?

Editors help writers write better. If you learn to edit, you can help *yourself* write better. Here are fifteen ways in which editing may improve your writing. Decide how much of each kind of improvement you need. Then mark your decision in the square before each statement:

☐ = great need; ☐ = some need; ☐ = no need.

1. ☐ to correct my spelling
2. ☐ to correct my punctuation
3. ☐ to correct my use of capital and small letters
4. ☐ to choose the best words to say what I want
5. ☐ to start writing without fear of making mistakes
6. ☐ to go back and correct mistakes made in the first writing
7. ☐ to decide how to begin my papers
8. ☐ to make my writing more interesting
9. ☐ to cut the dull places from what I've written
10. ☐ to develop the interesting parts of what I've written
11. ☐ to organize my writing clearly
12. ☐ to write good conversation (dialogue)
13. ☐ to avoid papers that are too long or too short
14. ☐ to stop being afraid of words that are hard to spell
15. ☐ to invent good ideas to write about
16. ☐ other: \_\_\_\_\_

**EXTRA** Look over and think about what you have just done. Then write a convincing paragraph on the subject: *How Learning to Edit Can Help Me Write Better.*

## Lesson 4

## DELETE AND CLOSE THE GAP

When you write you sometimes put in letters that should not be there. Editors remove such mistakes by using the *delete* mark (shown at the right). It means "take out" or "delete":

This boy spat on the floor.

Another mark editors use is the *close* mark (shown at the right). It means "close," and it closes a gap that shouldn't be there:

My bedroom is sometimes so crowded that I must sleep on the carpet.

When a letter is deleted from inside a word, it leaves a gap to be closed:

crowded sleep delete close

Using delete and close marks, edit the following passage.

Suppose I some how got to to be an editor. I would eddit my littel brother and and sisster out off my bed room. There would n't bee anny gapps to cloase. In stead, I'd yuse two deetele mmarks, and thatt would bee all! Off course, Momm and Dadd meight nott nott like it, but I could jusst jusst say, "Kepp them in side youre youre roome." I'd even even pay them fieve dollarrs a a day for the ser vice, un till I ended up inn thee thee poor house. May be I'd like it therre.

Some correct spellings: **bedroom, close, dollars, instead, might, poorhouse, somehow, until, wouldn't**

## Extra

Write a paragraph that needs lots of delete and close marks. Give it to a classmate to edit. Write very clearly.

## ADD SOMETHING

Writers sometimes leave out necessary letters or words. Editors add what's needed by using a caret mark shown at the right:

<sup>e</sup>something; <sup>a</sup>banna; Because of mistakes I  
<sup>the</sup>failed test.

The following passage contains nearly thirty words with a letter or letters omitted and about twenty-five places where a word is missing. Edit the passage using carets to show where to put the needed additions.

Som peple say that girls diferent from boy. They  
 that girl are gentl and nice, but every boy tough and  
 rude. Wel, maybe that what peple saying, but  
 everybody I know doesn't fit with people say. My  
 friend's sistr, example, whose name Sally, is  
 extreme strong fierce. She able beat up boy who are  
 whole year oldr than she is, and she not at all gentle  
 nice. Howevr, does get very marks in scool, and  
 the all like her as pupil. On other hand, own  
 bother, a boy year older than I, is alway read books  
 and gentl and nice except he's mad. Then he laugh  
 very and stamp out of room. Anywa, my ida is that  
 you can't make genral statments girls and boy. You  
 have ask: "Wich girl? Wich boy?"

Some correct spellings: **different, everybody, general, gentle, idea, people, school, statements, which**

**Extra** Make up ten sentences with letters and words missing.  
 Let a classmate, using carets to make additions, edit your sentences.

## Lesson 12

## CAPITAL AND SMALL LETTERS ≡ /

This is how editors show that a small letter should be capitalized:

nebraska

This is how they show that a capital letter should be written small:

~~C~~andy

Here's an edited sentence:

my ~~s~~ister amy hates ~~W~~inter,  
~~B~~ut she ~~L~~oves jim.

Now edit the passages below for mistakes in capitalization.

**HINT 1:** Capitalize the first word of a sentence, proper names (*Dallas, Ken*) and proper adjectives (*French, American*), and the names of days, months, and organizations (*Monday, May, the American Red Cross*). **HINT 2:** Don't capitalize seasons (*spring, fall*), or words such as *uncle* or *mother* unless they are part of a name (*Uncle Ben*).

1. the tv Announcer said: "you've heard both our Editorial And a Reply to our Editorial. now Here is jane castle, speaking for Those who have No Opinion."

2. he went to california to get into the Movies and He did get In. He Sells Popcorn at a Drive-In.

3. a long-Winded preacher came to Church with a Bandaged Finger. He explained, "you see, I was Thinking about my Sermon and cut my Finger."

after the sermon, a Member said to Him, "perhaps it Would have been Better, reverend jackson, to Think about your Finger and cut Your Sermon."

4. "i hate Wars," Said the Child. "they make too much History."

**EXTRA**

Make up some passages that contain mistakes in capitalization and give them to a classmate to edit.